

Keith Golden, P.E., Commissioner



GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

One Georgia Center, 600 West Peachtree Street, NW
Atlanta, Georgia 30308
Telephone: (404) 631-1000

May 15, 2012

Mr. Edward Johnson, Branch Chief
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Savannah District Regulatory Division
Piedmont Branch
1590 Adamson Parkway, Suite 200
Morrow, Georgia 30260-177
Attn: Katie Freas

Re: Addendum to the Ecology Assessment of Effects Report, Fulton County, NH000-0056-01(061), P.I. No. 751580, SR 400/US 19
@ CR 145/Northridge Road

Dear Mr. Johnson:

Please find attached the Addendum to the Ecology Assessment of Effects Report for the above referenced project. Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) Project PI 751580, NH000-0056-01(061) consists of replacing the Northridge Road bridge over State Road (SR) 400, additional signage, and the reconfiguring of Northridge Road through lanes, northbound and southbound entrance and exit ramps, Dunwoody Place and Roberts Drive. The project purpose is to relieve traffic congestion around the intersection by adding capacity and through traffic management.

The anticipated impacts associated with the proposed project, which are detailed within the attached Addendum to the Ecology Assessment of Effects Report, can be summarized as follows:

- Total of 92 linear feet of impacts to an Intermittent stream (62 linear feet of piping and 30 linear feet of rip-rap);
- Project requires a Nationwide Permit (14) prior to construction; no mitigation is required;
- No impacts to migratory birds or bats ;
- No impacts to essential fish habitat;
- No effect to any of the federally listed species or habitat for Fulton County;
- No effect to the bald eagle under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act.

The Department respectfully requests your concurrence on the biological effect determinations above. Thank you for your attention to this matter. If you should have any questions or need additional information, please contact Doug Chamblin at (404) 631-1447 (dchamblin@dot.ga.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Glenn Bowman" followed by a stylized initial or mark.

Glenn Bowman, P.E.
State Environmental Administrator

GB/HDC/jem

Attachment

cc: Frank Scott, GDOT NEPA
Marlo Clowers, GDOT PM
Eugene Hopkins, GDOT ECB
Eric Martin, Kimley-Horn & Associates, Inc.

Addendum to the Ecology Assessment of Effects Report

Project Number: NH000-0056-01(061)
P.I. Number 751580
SR 400/US 19 @ CR 145/Northridge Road
Fulton County

Prepared by:
Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc.
2 Sun Court, Suite 220
Norcross, GA 30092

Prepared for:
Georgia Department of Transportation Office of Environmental Services
One, Georgia Center
600 West Peachtree Street NW, 16th Floor
Atlanta, Georgia 30308

Written by: 

Date: March 6, 2012

Executive Summary

This Addendum to the Ecology Assessment of Effects Report (Addendum) provides an update to the report that was approved in December 2011. This Addendum provides updated ecology information based on the current Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc. design plans. Since this project is not using federal funding, this Addendum and the approved ecology document were prepared for compliance with the Georgia Environmental Policy Act.

Project Description

Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) Project PI 751580, NH000-0056-01(061) consists of replacing the Northridge Road bridge over SR 400, additional signage, and the widening of Northridge Road through lanes, northbound and southbound entrance and exit ramps, Dunwoody Place and Roberts Drive. The northbound entrance ramp will be on new location and terminate approximately 1,900 feet north of its current location. The total project length is approximately 0.40 miles and the total project area is 18.2 acres.

Documentation Summary

The Ecology Resource Survey and Assessment of Effects Report was approved in December 2011. The approved report included no buffered state waters, federal waters, suitable habitat for protected species, or state stream buffers. The approved report included no impacts to critical habitat, essential fish habitat, or bats and would have “no effect” on the bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*). Special Provision 107.23G was prepared for the Northridge Road bridge widening.

Ecology Impact and Design Changes

In January 2012, the design team determined that the Northridge Road bridge would need to be replaced with a wider bridge. The previous design included widening the existing bridge deck. The wider bridge replacement requires design changes including the northbound entrance and exit ramp realignments.

During the February 2012 field survey, one non-buffered State Water and one intermittent stream was identified within the revised project area. An underground utility line including a water main is located adjacent to the SR 400 northbound entrance ramp and the corridor can be seen on the attached Survey Area Map. No new invasive species have been identified in the project area. No changes have occurred to protected species occurrences within 3-miles of the project. The new project area is comprised of a maintained plant community and a mixed pine/hardwood forest that do not provide suitable habitat for protected species. Therefore, the project will not impact any suitable habitat for protected species.

Impacts to the intermittent stream would include piping 62 linear feet (0.004 acre) and bank armoring impact for placement of rip-rap stone in 30 linear feet (0.002 acre), resulting in total stream impacts of 92 linear feet (0.006 acre). The IS 3 state water buffer impacts would not require a buffer variance application because of the exemption for the proposed perpendicular crossing. Since adverse impacts would be below 100 linear feet and 0.1 acre, no mitigation will be required for the proposed project. This project would require the submittal of a Nationwide Permit (14) prior to construction.

Addendum to the Ecology Assessment of Effects Report

Overview Tables PI 751580, Fulton County

Impacts to Federally Jurisdictional Resources		
Resource	Length of Impact (ft)	Area of Impact (acres)
Perennial Stream	N/A	N/A
Intermittent Stream	92	0.006
Ephemeral Channel	N/A	N/A
TOTAL	N/A	N/A
Wetland	N/A	N/A
Open Water	N/A	N/A
TOTAL	N/A	N/A

Present in the Project Area	
Invasive Species	Yes
Bald Eagle Nests, Habitat	No
Critical Habitat	No
Essential Fish Habitat	No
Bat Roosting Habitat	Yes
Migratory Bird Habitat	Yes

Permitting & Coordination	
FWCA	Not Required
Buffer Variance	Not Required
Special Provision 107.23G	Not Required
Permit	Required
Mitigation	Not Required

Protected Species Surveys					
Species	Survey Season	Survey Date	Individuals Found	Biological Determination	Special Provisions 107.23G
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

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I. Project Description

This Addendum to the Ecology Assessment of Effects Report (Addendum) provides an update to the report that was approved in December 2011. This Addendum provides updated ecology information based on the current Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc. design plans. The original design plans involved the existing bridge, whereas the updated plans involve new bridge alignment and a reconfiguring of the northbound ramp. The design plans created a project area that is different than the original project area, and therefore has a larger environmental survey area.

Project PI Number 751580, funded entirely with State monies, consists of approximately 0.4 mile of widening along Northridge Road. Widening improvements would include additional signage for the northbound exit ramp from SR 400, additional through lanes on Northridge Road to accommodate improved traffic flow, and a replacement of the existing bridge. The proposed project would widen the northbound and southbound entrance and exit ramps, replace the Northridge Road bridge over SR 400, Northridge Road, Dunwoody Place and Roberts Drive. The northbound entrance will be on new location and terminate approximately 1900 feet north of its current location. The project would terminate at the existing five lane section of Northridge Road just west of Dunwoody Place, which would provide a consistent five lane section along Northridge Road.

The Northridge Road existing typical section consists of two 9.5-foot travel lanes in each direction with one 10-foot center left-turn lane, curb and gutter, and a 5-foot sidewalk. The width of the right-of-way (ROW) varies; it is 60 feet on the east side of SR 400, and 100 feet on the west side of SR 400. The existing bridge is a four-span, concrete deck and steel plate girder on concrete bent structure. The bridge is 289 feet long and 61 feet wide with a sidewalk on south side of the bridge. The sufficiency rating of the structure is 54.5. The proposed typical section would consist of four 11-foot travel lanes, one 11-foot center left-turn lane, 10-foot urban shoulders that include curb-and-gutter and a 5-foot sidewalk on the south shoulder, and an 11-foot auxiliary lane from SR 400 northbound to Dunwoody Place northbound. The proposed bridge is approximately 350 feet long and 90 feet wide. The proposed ROW will vary between 60 to 118 feet. The project will provide capacity and operational improvements to the SR 400 ramps at Northridge Road as well as the intersections of Northridge Road at Dunwoody Place and Roberts Drive.

II. Federal and State Water and State-mandated Buffer Assessment

The approved ecology report includes Non-buffered State Water 1 and its description has been included below. On February 10, 2012, KHA Ecologist Eric Martin, PWS performed a pedestrian survey of the updated survey limits in approximately two hours. For the previous 3 days, no precipitation had occurred at this site. During the survey, a new one non-buffered state water and one intermittent stream were identified.

Non-buffered State Water 1 (in approved report)

Non-buffered State Water 1 is located to the west side of the SR 400 southbound entrance ramp, within the maintained ROW, and along the entrance ramp shoulder's toe of slope. The channel is approximately 1 to 2 feet wide and 1 foot deep. The substrate is predominantly clay with no observed flowing water or pooled water. This channel does not have an ordinary high water mark and hydric soils were not observed within the channel bed. This channel receives storm water runoff from a small maintained area located on the south side of Northridge Road. Non-buffered State Water 1 is a non-buffered drainage ditch because it does not have wretted vegetation by normal stream flow, indicators of groundwater-induced base flow, or hydric soils. This ditch does not have an ordinary high water mark. Non-buffered State Water 1 is neither a trout stream nor a 2010 303(d)-listed channel. Non-buffered State Water 1 is outside of the project area and would not be impacted by the proposed project.

Non-buffered State Water 2 (new)

Non-buffered State Water 2 is located to the east side of the SR 400 northbound entrance ramp shoulder. From the 36 inch pipe under the ramp, the channel consists of a 5 foot wide concrete flume and then a rip-rap stone lined channel for a total length of approximately 157 feet. From the end of the flume, the channel is significantly eroded and incised. The substrate is predominantly clay and rip-rap stone with no observed flowing water or pooled water. This channel does not have an ordinary high water mark and hydric soils were not observed within the channel bed. Based on the significant bank erosion and channel armoring, this channel appears to receive a significant volume of storm water runoff from SR 400 in the area north of Northridge Road. Non-buffered State Water 2 is a non-buffered drainage ditch because it does not have wrested vegetation by normal stream flow, indicators of groundwater-induced base flow, or hydric soils. This ditch does not have an ordinary high water mark. Non-buffered State Water 2 is neither a trout stream nor a 2010 303(d)-listed channel. For the new northbound SR 400 entrance ramp, approximately 157 linear feet of non-buffered State Water 2 would be piped with a 36 inch pipe.

Intermittent Stream 3 (new)

Intermittent Stream 3 (IS 3) is a low quality, fully-impaired intermittent stream that receives stormwater runoff from non-buffered State Water 2. IS 3 is approximately 3 to 4 feet wide and 1 foot deep. Due to the extensive piping and armoring, the channel bankfull dimensions cannot be estimated. The channel substrate is clay and gravel. Based upon the observation of an ordinary high water mark and soil based evidence of a high water table, this stream appears to be a jurisdictional water of the U.S. and buffered state water. IS 3 is not a trout stream or listed on the 2010 303(d) List. IS 3 is a fully-impaired stream due to significant erosion and incision and does not provide suitable habitat for protected species.

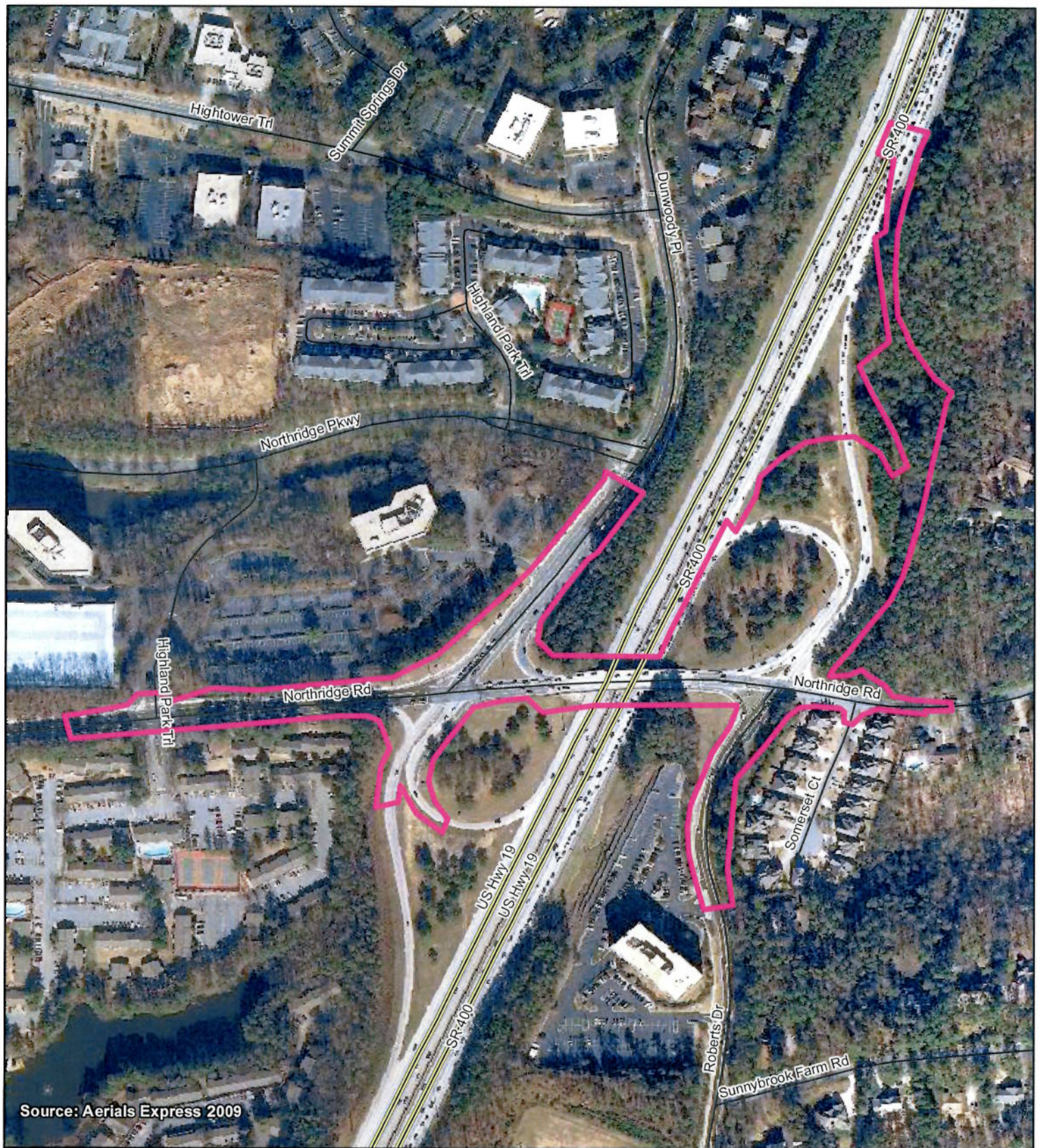
The IS 3 buffer vegetation includes loblolly pine (*Pinus taeda*), sweetgum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*), northern red oak (*Quercus rubra*), tulip poplar (*Liriodendron tulipifera*), shortleaf pine (*Pinus echinata*), and red maple (*Acer rubrum*). The riparian buffer is over 100 feet wide on both sides of the channel banks. The IS 3 state water buffer impacts would not require a buffer variance application because of the exemption for the proposed perpendicular crossing. For the new northbound SR 400 entrance ramp, there would be approximately 62 linear feet (0.004 acre) of impact for a 36 inch pipe and 30 linear feet (0.002 acre) of impact for placements of rip-rap stone.

III. Permit and Mitigation

The IS 3 state water buffer impacts would not require a buffer variance application because of the exemption for the proposed perpendicular crossing. Since adverse stream impacts would be below 100 linear feet and 0.1 acre, no mitigation will be required for the proposed project. This project would require the submittal of a Nationwide Permit (14) prior to construction.

IV. Figures

The Survey Area Maps, State and Federal Water Maps, Soil Maps, and Habitat Map are included on the following pages.



LEGEND

- Survey Area
- Roadways

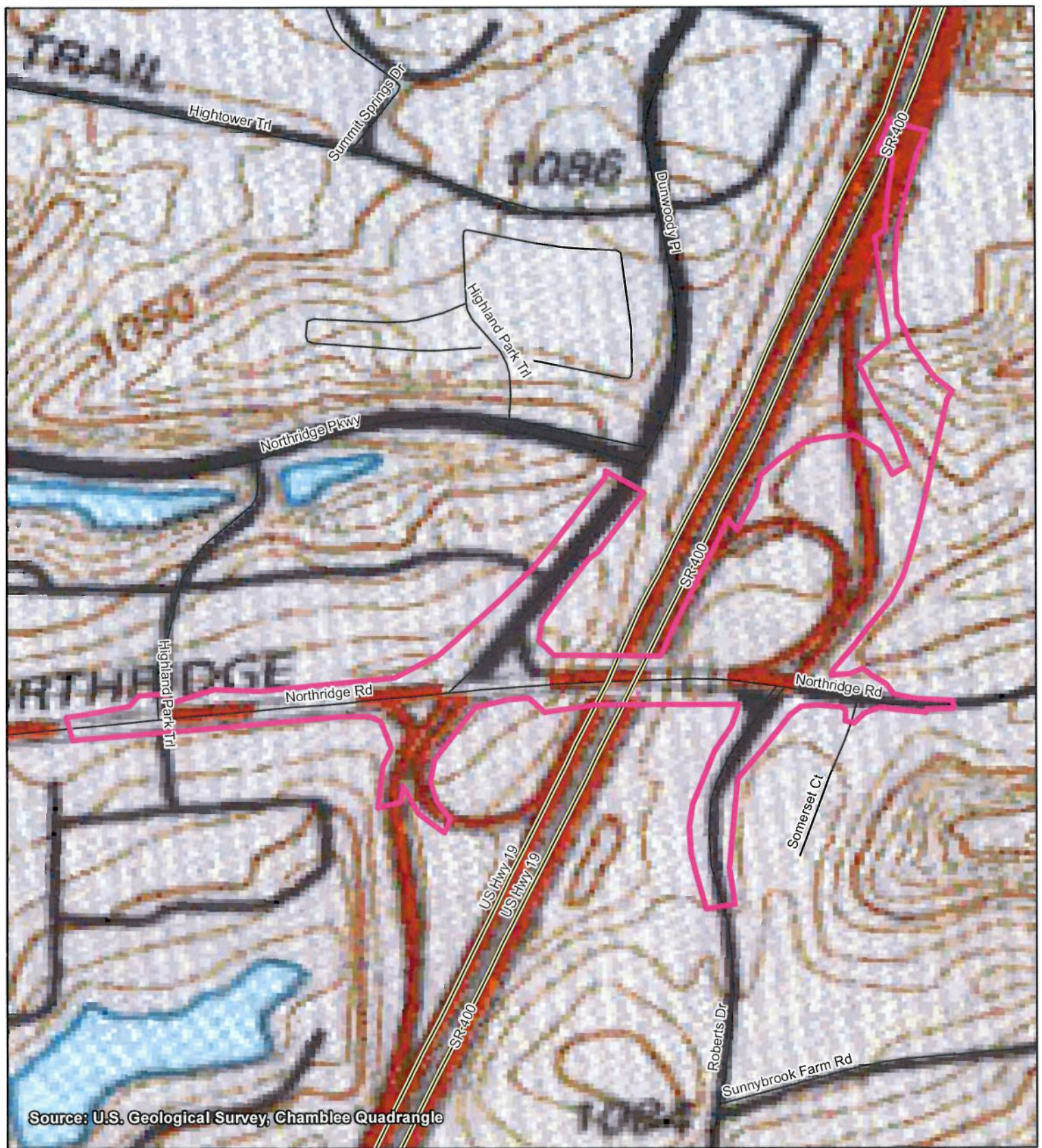
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0 80 160 Feet

Figure 1: Survey Area Map

P.I. No. 751580
Fulton County, Georgia

State Route 400 at Northridge Road -
Interchange and Ramp Improvements





LEGEND

- Survey Area
- Roadways

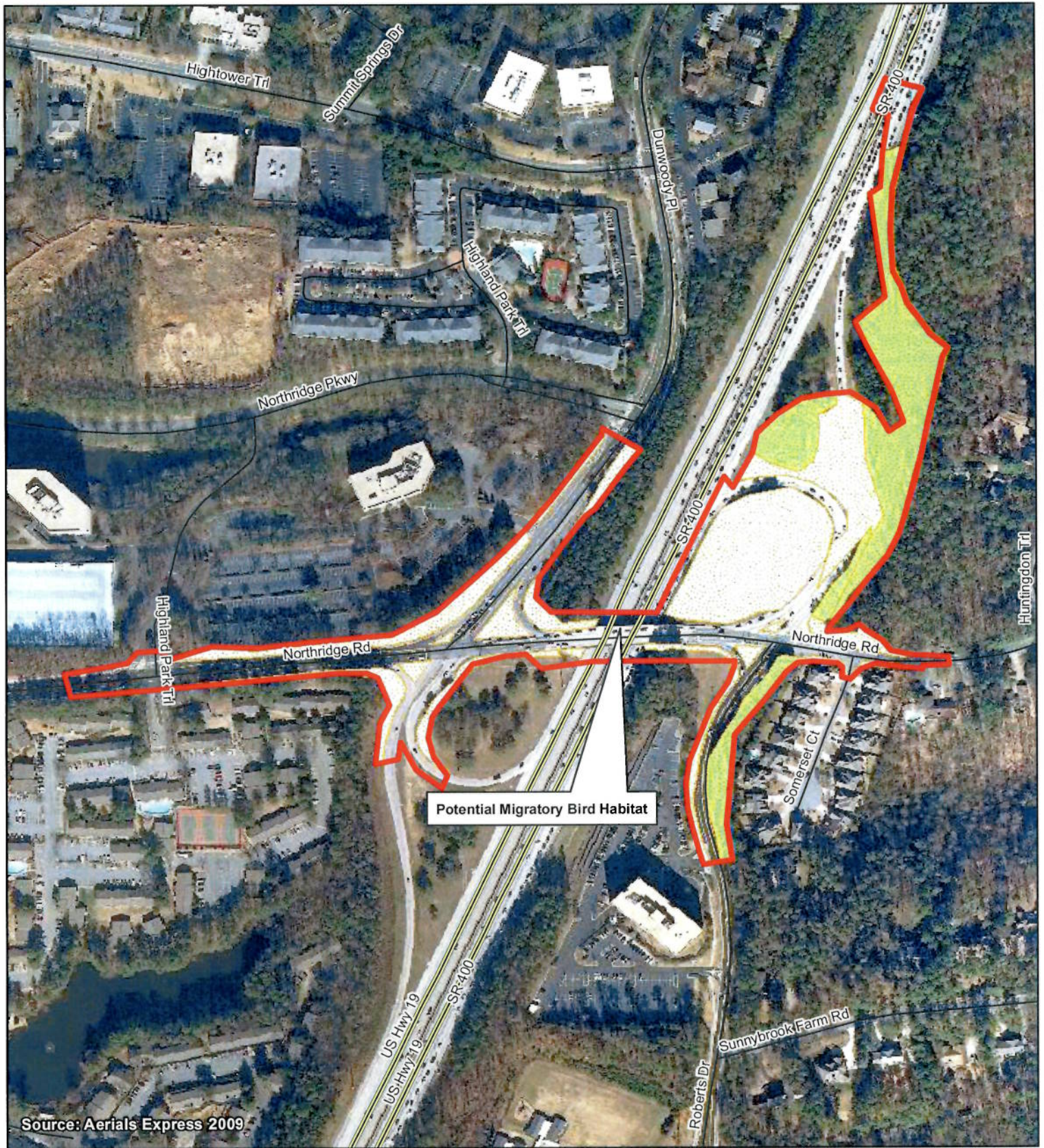
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Figure 2: Survey Area Map

P.I. No. 751580
Fulton County, Georgia

State Route 400 at Northridge Road -
Interchange and Ramp Improvements





LEGEND

- Roadways
- Survey Area
- Maintained Habitat
- Mixed Pine/Hardwood Habitat

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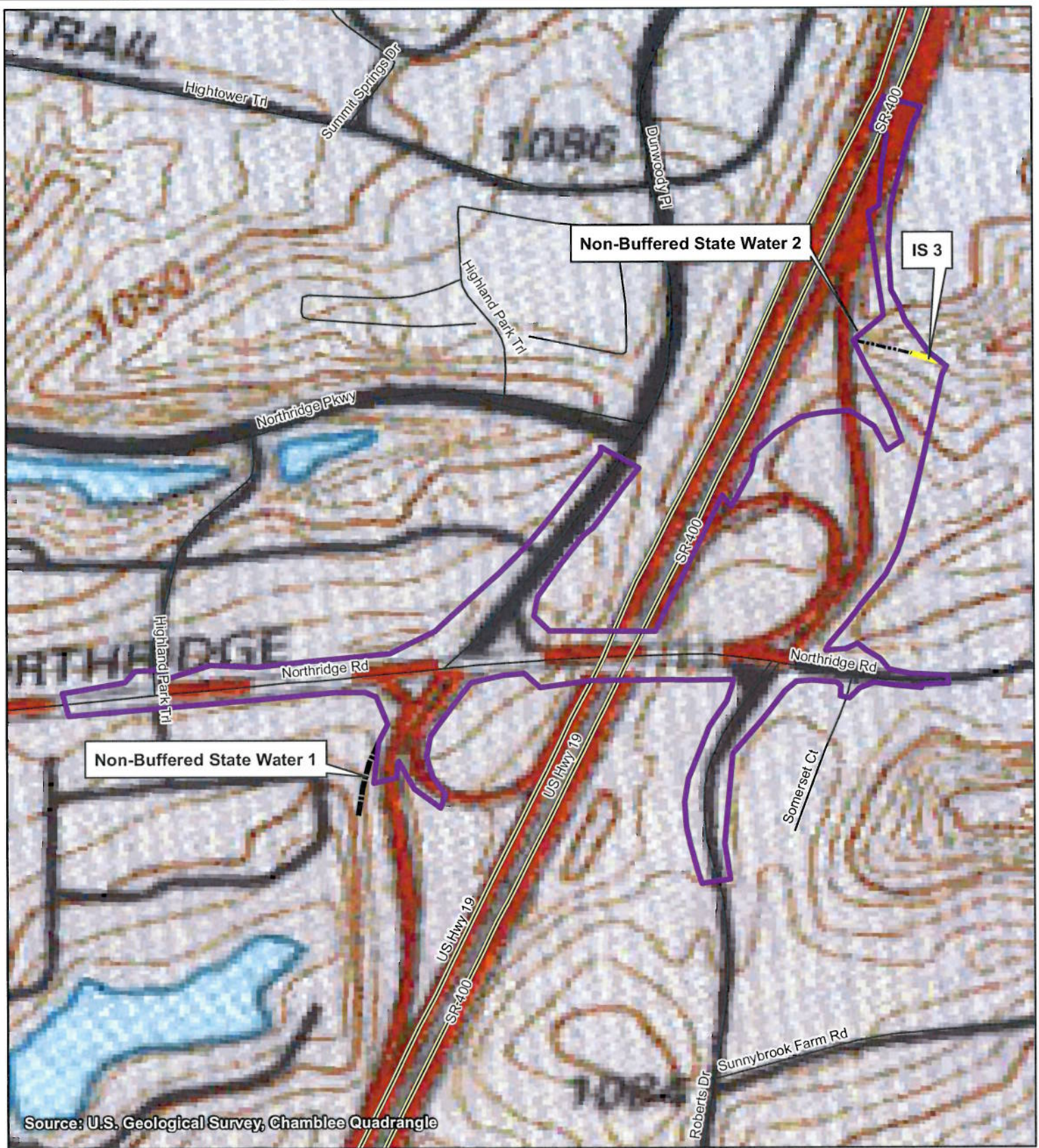
0 75 150 Feet

Figure 3: Habitat Map

P.I. No. 751580
Fulton County, Georgia

State Route 400 at Northridge Road -
Interchange and Ramp Improvements





LEGEND

- Survey Area
- Roadways
- Streams
- Non-Buffered State Water

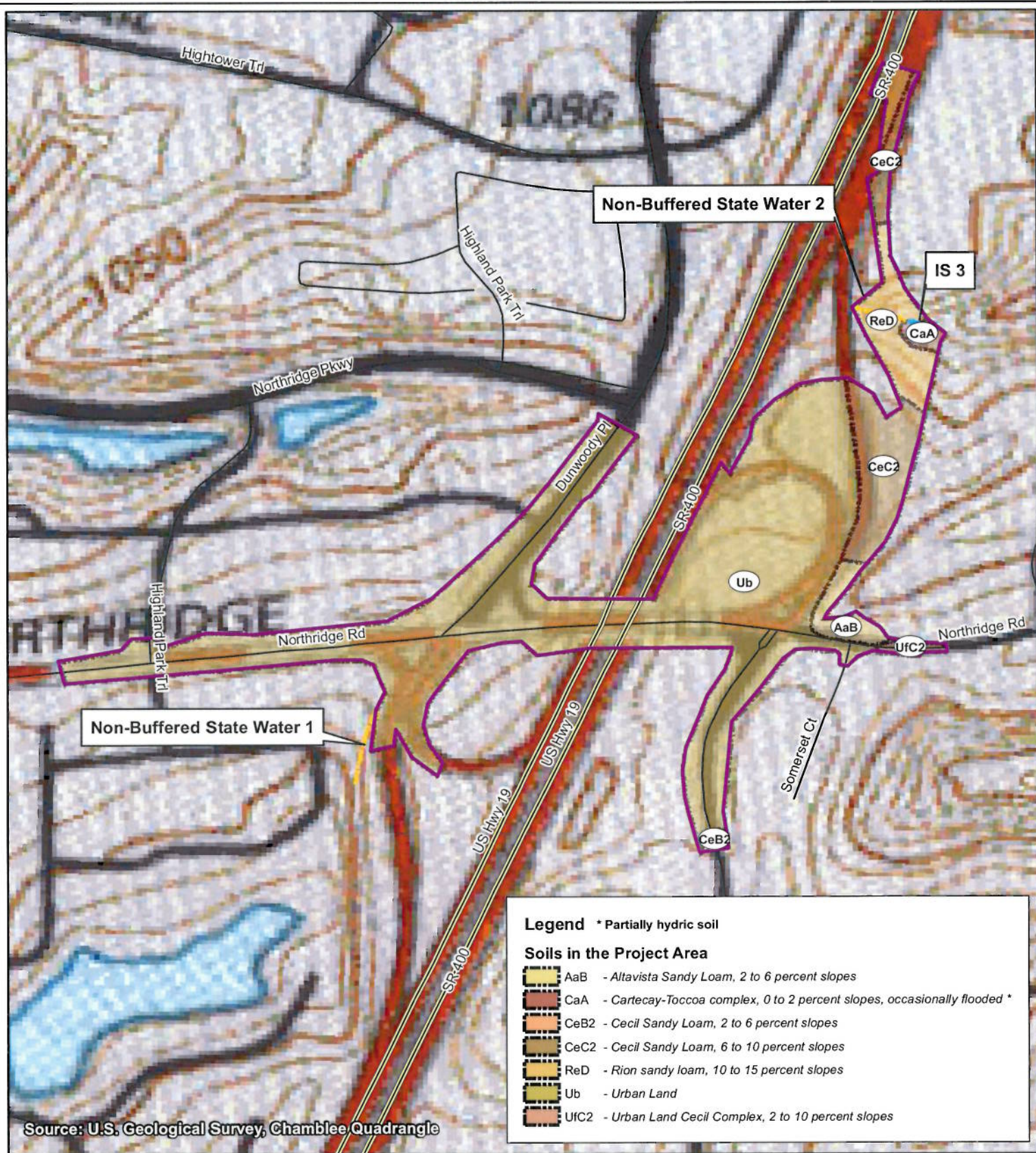
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Figure 4: State and Federal Waters Map

P.I. No. 751580
Fulton County, Georgia

State Route 400 at Northridge Road -
Interchange and Ramp Improvements





LEGEND

- Survey Area
 - Roadways
 - Non-Buffered State Water
 - Streams
- 1:4,500
- 0 275 550 Feet

Figure 5: Soils Map

P.I. No. 751580
Fulton County, Georgia

State Route 400 at Northridge Road -
Interchange and Ramp Improvements



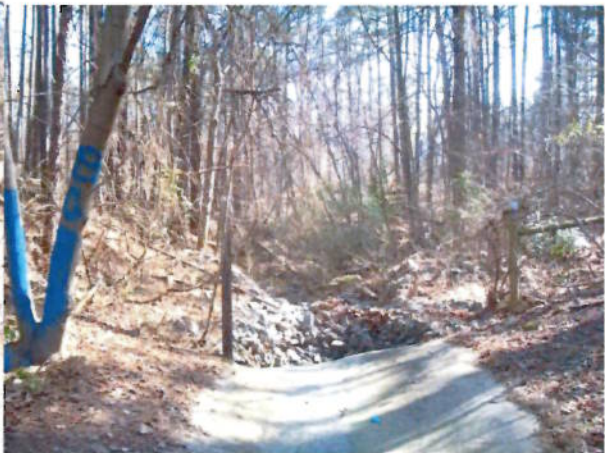
V. Tables

Table 1 Stream, Wetland, and Open Water Summary Table								
Resource Label	Cowardin Class	Drainage Association	Existing Conditions	HUC	Coordinates		303(d) List?	Adverse Impact
					Latitude	Longitude		
Non-Buffered State Water 1	N/A	Chattahoochee River	N/A	03130001	-84.343876	33.981055	N/A	N/A
Non-Buffered State Water 2	N/A	Chattahoochee River	N/A	03130001	-84.339915	33.984865	N/A	N/A
IS 3	N/A	Chattahoochee River	Fully Impaired	03130001	-84.339057	33.984629	No	62 ft (0.004 acre) – piping; 30 ft (0.002) – armoring

VI. Photographs



Non-buffered State Water 2, facing uphill



Non-buffered State Water 2, facing downhill



IS 3, facing upstream



IS 3, facing downstream



Buried utility corridor, facing south